

CITY OF SAN JOSÉ, CALIFORNIA
Department of Planning, Building and Code Enforcement
801 North First Street, Room 400
San José, California 95110-1795

Hearing Date/Agenda Number
P.C. 2/13/02 Item: 3.d.

File Number
PDC01-09-087

Application Type
Planned Development Rezoning

Council District
1

Planning Area
West Valley

Assessor's Parcel Number(s)
307-22-012

STAFF REPORT

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Completed by: Darren McBain

Location: South side of Payne Avenue approximately 250 feet westerly of San Tomas Aquino Road

Gross Acreage: 0.2

Net Acreage: 0.2

Net Density: 16 DU/AC

Existing Zoning: R-M Residence

Existing Use: One single-family detached residence

Proposed Zoning: A(PD) Planned Development

Proposed Use: Three single-family attached residences

GENERAL PLAN

Completed by: DM

Land Use/Transportation Diagram Designation
Medium Low Density Residential (8-16 DU/AC)

Project Conformance:
☒ Yes ☐ No
☒ See Analysis and Recommendations

SURROUNDING LAND USES AND ZONING

Completed by: DM

North: Apartments

CP Commercial Pedestrian

East: Apartments

R-M Residence

South: Apartments (common open space)

R-M Residence

West:: Apartments

R-M Residence

ENVIRONMENTAL STATUS

Completed by: DM

☐ Environmental Impact Report found complete
☐ Negative Declaration circulated on
☐ Negative Declaration adopted on

☒ Exempt
☐ Environmental Review Incomplete

FILE HISTORY

Completed by: DM

Annexation Title: Cypress No. 17

Date: May 3, 1966

PLANNING DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION

☒ Approval
☐ Approval with Conditions
☐ Denial
☐ Uphold Director's Decision

Date: _____

Approved by: _____
☐ Action
☒ Recommendation

APPLICANT/DEVELOPERS

Rob Berkeland and Todd Zeman
190 Hardy Ave.
Campbell, CA 95008

PUBLIC AGENCY COMMENTS RECEIVED

Completed by: DM

Department of Public Works

See attached memo

Other Departments and Agencies

Not attached

GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE

None received.

ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

BACKGROUND

The applicants, Rob Berkeland and Todd Zeman, are proposing a rezoning from R-M Residence to A(PD) Planned Development to allow up to three single-family attached residences on a 0.2-gross-acre site. The project site is currently developed with one single-family detached residence that was built in the 1950s. The existing, somewhat dilapidated house is the last remaining single-family house in the immediate area. The site is bordered by two-story, 1960s-era apartment buildings on either side. The apartment building to the east of the site has an outdoor swimming pool and patio area that wraps around the back of the subject site. The area directly across four-lane Payne Avenue to the north of the site is characterized by high-density, three-story apartments.

This project is proposed under a Planned Development Zoning in order to allow the units to ultimately be subdivided and sold on individual lots. Under a Site Development Permit, the units would have to function in perpetuity as rental units or condominiums on one commonly owned lot. Additionally, the RM-Multiple Residence Zoning District requires a 25-foot rear setback, which is substantially more stringent than that which is proposed and necessary in order to comply with the Residential Design Guidelines.

Project Description

The proposed project consists of three single-family attached rowhouse units that form one building. The buildings are two-story, with a maximum height of approximately 28 feet. Each unit has a two-car garage, and two on-site parking spaces are also provided. Each proposed unit has a net living area of approximately 1,700 to 1,900 square feet. Each of the units has a rear yard providing a minimum of 300 square feet of private open space.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The Director of Planning has determined that this project is exempt from further environmental review under the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). CEQA Guidelines include an

exemption (Section 15303b) for duplexes and similar structures designed for up to six dwelling units in urbanized areas.

GENERAL PLAN CONFORMANCE

The proposed project has a net density of 16 DU/AC, which conforms to the site's General Plan Land Use/Transportation Diagram designation of Medium Low Density Residential (8-16 DU/AC).

ANALYSIS

The primary issue concerned in the proposed rezoning is conformance to the City's *Residential Design Guidelines* (RDGs), including site design and architecture.

Site Design

Based on the following analysis, the proposed project is in substantial or full conformance with all of the development standards recommended in the RDGs for rowhouses with regard to setbacks, parking and open space.

The design of the proposed buildings includes a front setback varying from 15 to 25 feet behind the property line on Payne Avenue. While the RDGs typically require a 35-foot front setback from major public streets like Payne Avenue, a reduced setback is permissible in order to maintain a consistent development pattern with adjacent development in established neighborhoods. A greater setback could undesirably place the proposed building within a "hole" between the existing adjacent apartments, and would also have the potential to render this relatively small site more or less undevelopable. The units are set back ten feet and 25 feet from the adjacent apartment buildings. These setbacks match and exceed what is provided on the adjacent sites. The back of the building has a five-foot setback from the common open space area behind the site, which is consistent with the RDGs. In order to minimize privacy and noise conflicts the back of the proposed building has only one second-story window.

The RDGs state that, in order to foster an urban streetscape, rowhouses should typically be oriented toward a public street. In this case, however, the three rowhouse units that comprise this project are placed along a private driveway. It is staff's opinion that the project meets the RDGs' intent, in that its design and configuration allow the greatest degree of street "presence," given the small size, shape and orientation of the site in question, and the higher-density character of this neighborhood.

Each of the units has slightly more than 300 square feet of enclosed back yard, which is less than the 400 square feet that the RDGs recommend for rowhouses. However, it is significantly larger than what is provided for units at the adjacent apartment complexes. Substantial additional landscaping is provided between the driveway and the building. Although the project design uses two-car tandem garages, which devote much less of each unit's frontage to garage door area than a typical side-by-side garage, the amount of front landscaping provided is slightly less than the 180 square feet per unit recommended in the RDGs (not including the front setback area). However, the applicants have provided horizontal trellises for climbing vines above the garage doors and an enhanced landscape area on the other side of the driveway, near the project entrance. These compensating design measures are adequate, in staff's view, to bring the project's front landscaping into conformance with the RDGs. The narrower 12-foot-wide section of driveway is not expected to impede two-way vehicular movements in and out of this three-unit project.

Per the parking ratios suggested in the RDGs, each of the units is required to provide one uncovered “guest” parking space within 150 feet of the unit. Two spaces are provided on the site. Under a Planned Development Zoning, on-street parking spaces may, at staff’s discretion, be counted toward this requirement if on-street parking is adequately available, has a good functional relationship with the units, and there is not an existing high demand for curbside parking in the immediate vicinity. In this case, staff determined that one of the two on-street parking spaces in front of the project should be counted for the front unit. Therefore, the project is in conformance with the RDGs’ parking requirements.

Architecture

This project consists of a two-story building with stucco siding and a composition shingle roof. The style, materials, scale, and character of the proposed structures are compatible with existing development in the neighborhood. Although the adjacent apartment buildings are larger and more massive than the proposed project, it is staff’s opinion that the proposal represents an appropriate choice of unit type and site design, given the relatively small size and development potential of this parcel.

Building facades are well articulated with one- and two-story elements, and include numerous changes in plane. Each unit has a prominent entrance and a covered porch. The roofs are hipped, sloping back from the front and the sides in order to minimize their perceived height and mass. The building is approximately 28 feet high at its tallest point, which is appropriate for this type of project and consistent with existing nearby development. The proposed site design includes large arbor-like trellises that extend over the driveway at both entrances to the project, softening the garage facades. As noted above, the project utilizes tandem garages, which allow the unit facades to be less dominated by garage doors, and are particularly appropriate for this relatively narrow type of unit.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

Notices for the community meeting and the public hearing were distributed to the owners and tenants of all properties located within 500 feet of the project site.

RECOMMENDATION

Planning staff recommends the Planning Commission forward a recommendation of approval and the City Council adopt an ordinance rezoning the subject site for the following reasons:

1. The proposed project conforms to the site’s General Plan Land Use/Transportation Diagram designation of Medium Low Density Residential (8-16 DU/AC).
2. The proposed project conforms to the intent of the Residential Design Guidelines.
3. The project furthers the goals and objectives of the City’s in-fill housing strategies.
4. The proposed rezoning is compatible with existing and proposed uses on the adjacent and neighboring properties.